

Black holes with hair*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Among the most remarkable results of classical general relativity are the black hole uniqueness theorems for pure gravity and for gravity coupled to electromagnetism. The simplicity and elegance of these black holes inspired Chandrasekhar's statement, in the prologue to his treatise [1], that “the black holes of nature are the most perfect macroscopic objects there are in the universe ... and ... they are the simplest objects as well”.

These uniqueness theorems, together with related results on black holes coupled to other types of matter and on the behavior of matter as it collapses to form a black hole, led to the widely repeated statement that “black holes have no hair” [2]. This statement had various interpretations. Some took it to mean that the only possible static fields outside a black hole horizon are those required by the conserved long-range charges. A weaker interpretation allowed such “hair”, but required that the solution be uniquely determined by its mass, angular momentum, and conserved charges. In either case, there was a question of whether the statement applied to all solutions, or only to stable solutions.

Many in the wider theoretical physics community thought that a general result, restricted perhaps by technical assumptions, had been established. In fact, as was clear to experts in the field, no-hair theorems had only been proven for very specific types of matter, and the more general statement, however interpreted, was only a conjecture.

Over the last decade it has become clear that this conjecture, even in its weaker form, is not in general true. When gravity is coupled to matter theories that have more complex structures — including theories similar to those of the standard model — there are black hole solutions that do, indeed, have hair. These black holes are most naturally subatomic,

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rather than astrophysical, in size. Interesting in their own right, they also help clarify which features are general characteristics of classical black holes and which are not, and at the same time lend insight into the quantum mechanical connection between black hole dynamics and thermodynamics.

By now, a variety of solutions with hair are known. In these lectures I will focus on the magnetically charged black holes that arise in spontaneously broken Yang-Mills-Higgs theories and on the properties of the related self-gravitating nonsingular magnetic monopoles. For an extensive review that includes discussions of other types of solutions, see [3].

After a brief general discussion of spherically symmetric black holes, I will review some of the properties of 't Hooft-Polyakov monopoles in flat spacetime. While these are usually understood from a topological point of view, I will present some energetic arguments that are perhaps more helpful in understanding the related black hole solutions. I will then describe the effects of gravity on the singly-charged monopole. These are two-fold. First, there is an upper bound on the mass of a nonsingular monopole, with the monopole going over into an extremal black hole as this limit is reached. Second, it is possible to embed a black hole within the monopole core, thus yielding a black hole with hair. These solutions with hair can be degenerate in mass and charge with pure Reissner-Nordstrom solutions. I will show that in these theories the latter have a classical instability that leads to decay into solutions with hair. In the case of Reissner-Nordstrom black holes with higher magnetic charge, this instability can lead to static black holes without any rotational symmetry. Finally, in the last part of these lectures I will examine in more detail the transition from nonsingular monopole to black hole, focusing on how the “quasi-black holes” that are just short of this transition appear to an external observer. As we will see, these provide interesting insights into the origin of black hole entropy.

II. SPHERICALLY SYMMETRIC BLACK HOLES

For the sake of simplicity, in these lectures I will focus for the most part on solutions with static, spherically symmetric metrics. Any such metric can be written in the form

$$ds^2 = -B(r)dt^2 + A(r)dr^2 + R^2(r)(d\theta^2 + \sin^2\theta d\phi^2). \quad (2.1)$$

Furthermore, I will use the freedom to redefine coordinates to set $R(r) = r$ and write

$$ds^2 = -B(r)dt^2 + A(r)dr^2 + r^2(d\theta^2 + \sin^2\theta d\phi^2). \quad (2.2)$$

A zero of $1/A$ corresponds to a horizon, while a double zero corresponds to an extremal horizon.

The two simplest black holes of this form are the Schwarzschild and the Reissner-Nordstrom solutions. The Schwarzschild black hole is a vacuum solution with

$$B_{\text{Sch}} = A_{\text{Sch}}^{-1} = 1 - \frac{2MG}{r}. \quad (2.3)$$

There is a coordinate singularity at the horizon, $r = 2MG$, and a true curvature singularity at $r = 0$. The maximally extended spacetime contains two exterior regions, each with $2MG < r < \infty$ and $-\infty < t < \infty$; a region, with $0 < r < 2MG$, that lies to the future of the horizon and ends on a spacelike $r = 0$ singularity; and finally a region, also with $0 < r < 2MG$, that lies in the past of the horizon and has an initial spacelike $r = 0$ singularity. It is important to keep in mind that r is actually a timelike coordinate for values less than $2MG$. Hence, it is somewhat misleading to think of the region with $r < 2MG$ as the “interior” of the black hole; one can draw a complete spacelike hypersurface through the spacetime on which r is never less than $2MG$.

The Reissner-Nordstrom solution has Coulomb electric and magnetic fields

$$\mathbf{E} = Q_E \frac{\hat{\mathbf{r}}}{r^2} \quad \mathbf{B} = Q_M \frac{\hat{\mathbf{r}}}{r^2} \quad (2.4)$$

and a metric

$$B_{\text{RN}} = A_{\text{RN}}^{-1} = 1 - \frac{2MG}{r} + \frac{4\pi G(Q_E^2 + Q_M^2)}{r^2}. \quad (2.5)$$

There are three cases to consider. If

$$M > \sqrt{4\pi(Q_E^2 + Q_M^2)} M_{\text{Pl}} \quad (2.6)$$

(where the Planck mass $M_{\text{Pl}} = G^{-1/2}$ in units where $c = \hbar = 1$) the metric describes a black hole solution with horizons at

$$r_{\pm} = MG \pm \sqrt{M^2 G^2 - 4\pi G(Q_E^2 + Q_M^2)} \quad (2.7)$$

and a timelike curvature singularity at $r = 0$. The maximally extended spacetime contains an infinite sequence of exterior regions. It is possible for a worldline to pass through an infinite sequence of such regions without ever encountering the $r = 0$ singularities.

If

$$M = \sqrt{4\pi(Q_E^2 + Q_M^2)} M_{\text{Pl}} \quad (2.8)$$

there is an extremal black hole, with a horizon at

$$r_0 = MG = \sqrt{4\pi(Q_E^2 + Q_M^2)} M_{\text{Pl}}^{-1}. \quad (2.9)$$

As in the previous case, the maximally extended spacetime contains an infinite sequence of exterior regions, and it is possible to avoid the timelike singularity at $r = 0$. On any hypersurface of constant time, the extremal horizon at $r = r_0$ is an infinite proper distance from any point with $r \neq r_0$; nevertheless, a worldline starting at any $r > r_0$ can cross the horizon and reach $r < r_0$ in a finite proper time.

Finally, if

$$M < \sqrt{4\pi(Q_E^2 + Q_M^2)} M_{\text{Pl}} \quad (2.10)$$

there is no horizon, but only a naked singularity at $r = 0$.

The Schwarzschild and Reissner-Nordstrom solutions are the only static black hole solutions in the Einstein-Maxwell theory; if we only require that the solution be stationary, there is also the Kerr-Newman solution, which includes the others as special cases. Thus, these black holes are completely specified by giving their mass, angular momentum, and electric and magnetic charges. This result was the inspiration for the no-hair conjecture. However, although the statement that “black holes have no hair” was widely repeated, this conjecture was actually proven only in a number of very specific contexts.

As an example of these, consider the case of gravity coupled to a scalar field $\phi(x)$ [4]. The dynamics of ϕ are governed by a potential $V(\phi)$ that is assumed to have a single minimum, at $\phi = \phi_0$. To simplify the presentation I will assume spherical symmetry, although the proof is readily extended to the more general case. With a metric of the form given in Eq. (2.2), and ϕ assumed to depend only on r , the scalar field equations take the form

$$\frac{1}{r^2\sqrt{AB}} \left(\frac{r^2\sqrt{AB}\phi'}{A} \right)' = \frac{dV}{d\phi} \quad (2.11)$$

with primes denoting differentiation with respect to r . Multiplying both sides of this equation by common factors, we obtain

$$(\phi - \phi_0) \left(\frac{r^2\sqrt{AB}\phi'}{A} \right)' = (\phi - \phi_0) r^2 \sqrt{AB} \frac{dV}{d\phi}. \quad (2.12)$$

We now assume that there is a horizon at $r = r_H$, and integrate the above equation from r_H to infinity. An integration by parts leads to

$$\int_{r_H}^{\infty} dr \frac{d}{dr} \left[(\phi - \phi_0) \frac{r^2\sqrt{AB}\phi'}{A} \right] = \int_{r_H}^{\infty} dr r^2 \sqrt{AB} \left[\frac{(\phi')^2}{A} + (\phi - \phi_0) \frac{dV}{d\phi} \right]. \quad (2.13)$$

The left hand side is equal to the sum of surface terms at the horizon and at infinity. The former vanishes because $1/A = 0$ on the horizon. Because ϕ must approach its vacuum value at $r = \infty$, the decreases in ϕ' and $\phi - \phi_0$ are rapid enough that the surface term at infinity also vanishes. The integral on the right hand side must therefore be equal to zero. The first term in the integrand is manifestly positive (since $A > 0$ outside the horizon), while our assumption that V has a single minimum implies that the second term is also positive. Hence, the only way that the integral can vanish is for $\phi(r)$ to be equal to its vacuum value ϕ_0 everywhere outside the horizon.

This proof relied crucially on the assumed properties of $V(\phi)$. It would have failed if the potential had multiple minima, or if there were additional fields present. Although the proof can be extended to a wider class of scalar field theories [5], this reliance on the details of the theory suggests that it might be possible to construct black holes with hair in a theory with a sufficiently complex structure. As we will see, a natural place to look is the spontaneously broken gauge theories that support magnetic monopole solutions in flat spacetime.

III. MAGNETIC MONOPOLES IN FLAT SPACETIME

Consider an SU(2) Yang-Mills theory with a triplet scalar field ϕ^a and a Lagrangian

$$\mathcal{L} = -\frac{1}{4}(F_{\mu\nu}^a)^2 + \frac{1}{2}(D_\mu\phi)^2 - V(\phi) \quad (3.1)$$

where the field strength

$$F_{\mu\nu}^a = \partial_\mu A_\nu^a - \partial_\nu A_\mu^a - e \epsilon_{abc} A_\mu^b A_\nu^c, \quad (3.2)$$

the covariant derivative

$$D_\mu\phi^a = \partial_\mu\phi^a - e \epsilon_{abc} A_\mu^b \phi^c, \quad (3.3)$$

and the scalar field potential

$$V(\phi) = -\frac{\mu^2}{2}\phi^2 + \frac{\lambda}{2}(\phi^2)^2 \quad (3.4)$$

with μ^2 and λ both positive.

The potential has a family of gauge-equivalent minima with

$$\phi^2 = v^2 \equiv \frac{\mu^2}{2\lambda} \quad (3.5)$$

that spontaneously break the SU(2) symmetry down to U(1). Without loss of generality, we can choose the vacuum with $\phi^a = v\delta^{a3}$. The fields corresponding to the physical elementary particles are then the “electromagnetic” U(1) gauge field $\mathcal{A}_\mu = A_\mu^3$, a neutral scalar field $\varphi = \phi^3$, and a complex vector field $W_\mu = (A_\mu^1 + iA_\mu^2)/\sqrt{2}$ whose quanta are spin-one particles with electric charge $\pm e$ and mass $m_W = ev$. In terms of these fields, the Lagrangian can be written as

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{L} = & -\frac{1}{2}|\mathcal{D}_\mu W_\nu - \mathcal{D}_\nu W_\mu|^2 - \frac{1}{4}(\mathcal{F}_{\mu\nu})^2 + \frac{1}{2}d_{\mu\nu}\mathcal{F}^{\mu\nu} - \frac{1}{4}(d_{\mu\nu})^2 \\ & + e^2\varphi^2|W_\mu|^2 + \frac{1}{2}(\partial_\mu\varphi)^2 - V(\varphi) \end{aligned} \quad (3.6)$$

where

$$\mathcal{F}_{\mu\nu} = \partial_\mu\mathcal{A}_\nu - \partial_\nu\mathcal{A}_\mu \quad (3.7)$$

and

$$\mathcal{D}_\mu = (\partial_\mu - ie\mathcal{A}_\mu) \quad (3.8)$$

denote the electromagnetic field strength and covariant derivative and

$$d_{\mu\nu} = ie[W_\mu^*W_\nu - W_\nu^*W_\mu] \quad (3.9)$$

is the magnetic moment density due to the charged vector field.

This theory possesses finite energy magnetic monopole solutions [6,7]. Their existence is usually motivated by topological arguments. One begins by considering configurations in which the scalar field at spatial infinity has its $SU(2)$ orientation correlated with the direction in space, so that as $r \rightarrow \infty$

$$\phi^a \rightarrow v \hat{r}^a. \quad (3.10)$$

Because such a configuration cannot be smoothly deformed to the uniform vacuum solution, it should be possible to obtain a static solution by minimizing the energy subject to this boundary condition. In order that the energy be finite, $D_i \phi$ must fall faster than $r^{-3/2}$, which implies a vector potential

$$A_i^a = \epsilon_{iak} \frac{\hat{r}^k}{er} + O(r^{-2}) \quad (3.11)$$

that gives rise to a Coulomb magnetic field

$$B_i^a = \frac{\hat{r}^a \hat{r}^k}{er^2} + O(r^{-3}). \quad (3.12)$$

Thus, this configuration describes a magnetic monopole with magnetic charge $Q_M = 1/e$. Higher charges can be obtained by allowing additional twisting of the asymptotic scalar field, but these must obey the topological quantization condition

$$Q_M = \frac{n}{e}. \quad (3.13)$$

One can proceed further by adopting the Ansatz

$$\begin{aligned} \phi^a &= v \hat{r}^a h(r) \\ A_i^a &= \epsilon_{iak} \hat{r}^k \left[\frac{1 - u(r)}{er} \right] \end{aligned} \quad (3.14)$$

with the boundary conditions $h(0) = u(\infty) = 0$ and $u(0) = h(\infty) = 1$. Substituting this Ansatz into the Euler-Lagrange equations of the theory gives a set of coupled ordinary differential equations that can be solved numerically. Their solution is characterized by a core region, of radius $R_{\text{core}} \sim (ev)^{-1}$, outside of which u and h approach their asymptotic values exponentially rapidly. The total energy is

$$M_{\text{mon}} \sim \frac{Q_M^2}{R_{\text{core}}} \sim \frac{v}{e}. \quad (3.15)$$

We will find it useful to view this solution from a somewhat different viewpoint [8]. To this end, note that by a singular gauge transformation the fields of Eq. (3.14) can be brought into the unitary gauge form

$$\begin{aligned}
\varphi &= h(r) \\
W_i &= \frac{f_i(\theta, \phi)}{er} u(r) \\
\mathcal{A}_i &= \mathcal{A}_i^{\text{Dirac}}
\end{aligned} \tag{3.16}$$

where the $f_i(\theta, \phi)$ are complex functions whose explicit form will not be needed and $\mathcal{A}_i^{\text{Dirac}}$ is the U(1) Dirac vector potential for a monopole of charge $1/e$. (Because it is only a gauge artifact, the string singularity of $\mathcal{A}_i^{\text{Dirac}}$ will be of no concern.) Note that $u(r)$ is directly related to the magnitude of the charged vector meson field.

In this gauge, the structure of the monopole can be understood by making reference to the form of the Lagrangian given in Eq. (3.6). Thus, we can imagine constructing the monopole solution by beginning with a point Dirac monopole. Because of the $1/r^2$ Coulomb magnetic field, this has a divergent energy density near the origin. However, this divergence can be cancelled by introducing the charged vector field, provided that the magnetic moment of the latter is properly oriented. Indeed, the appearance of a nonzero W field is to be expected whenever the energy gain from the interaction of the magnetic moment with the magnetic field outweighs the cost in mass energy; in the presence of our Coulomb field, this is the case for $r \lesssim (ev)^{-1} \sim R_{\text{core}}$. Finally, the vanishing of ϕ at the center of the monopole, which is explained on topological grounds in the usual description, occurs here because it minimizes the contribution of the W mass term to the energy.

The lesson to be drawn from this is that the appearance of a nonzero W field can be understood in terms of “local” physics, without any reference to the topological behavior at spatial infinity. In other words, the value of $W_i(\mathbf{r})$ at a given point is directly related to the value of the magnetic field at that point.

IV. SELF-GRAVITATING MONOPOLES AND MAGNETICALLY CHARGED BLACK HOLES WITH HAIR

Let us now include gravity in this analysis. One indication of what to expect can be gained by noting that the Schwarzschild radius $2MG \sim v/(eM_{\text{Pl}}^2)$ is comparable to the core radius if $v \sim M_{\text{Pl}}$. Hence, we might expect the monopole solutions to become black holes when v is greater than some critical value of the order of the Planck mass. (As long as $e \ll 1$, the mass and horizon radius will be much greater than the Planck mass and Planck length, respectively, so that quantum gravity effects should be negligible.) We will also see that these monopoles can have related black hole solutions even when $v \ll M_{\text{Pl}}$.

Let us begin by adapting the Ansatz of Eq. (3.14) to a curved spacetime with a spherically symmetric metric of the form of Eq. (2.2). The matter field part of the action can then be written in the $(1+1)$ -dimensional form

$$S_{\text{matter}} = -4\pi \int dt dr r^2 \sqrt{AB} \left[\frac{K}{A} + U \right] \tag{4.1}$$

where

$$K = \frac{(u')^2}{e^2 r^2} + \frac{1}{2} v^2 (h')^2 \quad (4.2)$$

and

$$U = \frac{(1 - u^2)^2}{2e^2 r^4} + \frac{u^2 h^2 v^2}{r^2} + \frac{\lambda v^4}{2} (1 - h^2)^2. \quad (4.3)$$

One can view U as being an r -dependent potential for two scalar fields u and h . At large r , its minimum occurs when $u = 0$ and $h = 1$. Near the origin, it is minimized by $u = 1$ and $h = 0$. For small scalar self-coupling, $\lambda < e^2$, these are the only minima of U . However, if $\lambda > e^2$ there is an intermediate region of r where the potential has a nontrivial r -dependent minimum that I will denote by $\hat{u}(r)$ and $\hat{h}(r)$.

The matter field equations can be obtained by varying the reduced action of Eq. (4.1). This gives

$$\frac{1}{\sqrt{AB}} \left(\frac{\sqrt{AB} u'}{A} \right)' = \frac{e^2 r^2}{2} \frac{\partial U}{\partial u} \quad (4.4)$$

$$\frac{1}{r^2 \sqrt{AB}} \left(\frac{r^2 \sqrt{AB} h'}{A} \right)' = \frac{1}{v^2} \frac{\partial U}{\partial h}. \quad (4.5)$$

These must be supplemented by equations for the metric functions A and B . Einstein's equations reduce to

$$\mathcal{M}' = 4\pi r^2 \left(\frac{K}{A} + U \right) \quad (4.6)$$

$$\frac{(AB)'}{AB} = 16\pi G r K \quad (4.7)$$

where the mass function $\mathcal{M}(r)$ is defined by

$$\frac{1}{A(r)} = 1 - \frac{2G\mathcal{M}(r)}{r}. \quad (4.8)$$

By substituting Eq. (4.7) into Eqs. (4.4) and (4.5), we can eliminate $B(r)$ and obtain a set of three coupled differential equations for u , h , and A . These are subject to a number of boundary conditions. At spatial infinity, finiteness of the energy requires that $u(\infty) = 0$ and $h(\infty) = 1$. In order that the fields and metric be nonsingular at the origin, we must require that $u(0) = 1$ and $h(0) = \mathcal{M}(0) = 0$. Finally, the coefficients of u'' and h'' in Eqs. (4.4) and (4.5) vanish at any zeroes of $1/A$. As a result, these equations give two additional constraints among u , h , u' , and h' at every horizon.

In general, a set of one first-order and two second-order equations will allow at most five boundary conditions to be satisfied. Hence, we might hope to find solutions without

horizons that are regular at both the origin and infinity (i.e., nonsingular self-gravitating monopoles) or black hole solutions that are finite at spatial infinity and at one horizon, but singular at the origin. Only for special choices of parameters would we expect to be able to have solutions that are regular at two horizons (like the Reissner-Nordstrom metric) or solutions regular at a horizon and at both $r = 0$ and $r = \infty$.

Of course, the presence of the correct number of boundary conditions does not guarantee the existence of a solution. To see whether there actually is a solution, one must resort to numerical techniques [9–12]. One finds that $1/A$ develops a minimum at a value of r of order v/e . As v is increased this minimum becomes deeper until, at a critical value v_{cr} of order M_{Pl} , an extremal horizon appears; this critical value varies with λ/e^2 . For $v > v_{\text{cr}}$ there are no nonsingular solutions. Later in these lectures I will return to these critical solutions and discuss the approach to the black hole limit in more detail.

There are also solutions with horizons. One type is obtained trivially. Setting $u = 0$ and $h = 1$ everywhere clearly satisfies Eqs. (4.4) and (4.5). Equations (4.6) and (4.7) then lead to a Reissner-Nordstrom metric with magnetic charge $1/e$ and arbitrary mass M .

We can also look for solutions with a horizon, but with nontrivial matter fields outside the horizon; i.e., black holes with hair. One can imagine doing this by putting a small Schwarzschild-like black hole in the center of a monopole. In other words, we assume that there is a horizon at $r_{\text{H}} = 2G\mathcal{M}_0$, where $\mathcal{M}_0 \ll M_{\text{mon}} \sim v/e$. Because such a horizon would correspond to a very light black hole, one would expect that its gravitational effects outside the horizon would be small, and that for $r \gtrsim r_{\text{H}}$ the solution would be similar to that for the nonsingular monopole. This expectation is borne out by detailed numerical and analytic investigations [9–11].

These solutions are possible only in a certain region of parameter space. Thus, consider integrating Eq. (4.6) to obtain the monotonically increasing mass function

$$\mathcal{M}(r) = \mathcal{M}_0 + 4\pi \int_{r_{\text{H}}}^r ds s^2 \left(\frac{K}{A} + U \right). \quad (4.9)$$

There will be a horizon whenever $\mathcal{M}(r)/r = 1/(2G)$. By construction, this occurs at $r = r_{\text{H}}$. If v is small, $\mathcal{M}(r)/r$ will initially decrease with increasing r outside the horizon, but will then begin to increase and, when $r \sim R_{\text{core}} \sim 1/(ev)$, reach a maximum of order $M_{\text{mon}}/R_{\text{core}} \sim v^2$, after which it decreases and asymptotically vanishes. As v is increased, the height of the maximum of $\mathcal{M}(r)/r$ will increase until it reaches $1/2G$ at a critical v of order M_{Pl} . Since we do not expect to be able to find solutions regular at two horizons and infinity, this sets a maximum value of v for the given \mathcal{M}_0 .

This analysis assumes that r_{H} is well inside the monopole core; we would not expect to find solutions with hair if $2G\mathcal{M}_0$ were considerably larger than R_{core} . This leads to the additional constraint $\mathcal{M}_0 \lesssim M_{\text{Pl}}^2/(ev) \sim M_{\text{Pl}}^2/(e^2 M_{\text{mon}})$. More detailed discussions and numerical analyses of these bounds are given in [9–11].

It is easy to see that these rough bounds allow the existence of solutions with hair that have masses greater than the extremal Reissner-Nordstrom mass $\sqrt{4\pi}M_{\text{Pl}}/e$. This implies that there can be two distinct black hole solutions with the same mass and charge: the solution with hair, and the Reissner-Nordstrom solution. This disproves the weaker form of the no-hair conjecture. It also raises the possibility of a transition from one solution to the other.

V. INSTABILITY OF THE REISSNER-NORDSTROM SOLUTION

To explore this possibility, let us examine the stability under small perturbations of a Reissner-Nordstrom solution with magnetic charge $1/e$ and outer horizon radius r_H [13]. For the moment I will consider only spherically symmetric modes and write

$$\begin{aligned} A &= A_{\text{RN}}(r) + \delta A(r, t) \\ B &= B_{\text{RN}}(r) + \delta B(r, t) \\ h &= 1 + \delta h(r, t) \\ u &= u(r, t) . \end{aligned} \tag{5.1}$$

Linearizing the field equations in the perturbations δA , δB , δh , and u , we find that they separate into a pair of equations involving only δA and δB , another involving only δh , and one involving u . It is clear that the first set give no instability, since otherwise the Reissner-Nordstrom solution would be unstable in the Maxwell-Einstein theory, which we know is not the case. It is also easy to see that δh has no unstable modes. Hence, we need only consider u , which obeys

$$\frac{1}{\sqrt{AB}} \frac{\partial}{\partial t} \left(\frac{\sqrt{AB}}{B} \frac{\partial u}{\partial t} \right) - \frac{1}{\sqrt{AB}} \frac{\partial}{\partial r} \left(\frac{\sqrt{AB}}{A} \frac{\partial u}{\partial r} \right) = \frac{u(1-u^2)}{r^2} - e^2 h^2 v^2 u . \tag{5.2}$$

Using the properties of the unperturbed metric and keeping only terms linear in u , we obtain from this

$$\frac{1}{B_{\text{RN}}} \frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial t^2} - \frac{\partial}{\partial r} \left(B_{\text{RN}} \frac{\partial u}{\partial r} \right) = - \left(e^2 v^2 - \frac{1}{r^2} \right) u . \tag{5.3}$$

An instability would correspond to an exponentially growing solution; i.e., a solution of the form $u = f(r)e^{i\omega t}$ with imaginary frequency ω .

The equation can be recast in a more familiar form by defining a new coordinate x by

$$\frac{dr}{dx} = B_{\text{RN}}(r) . \tag{5.4}$$

This maps the exterior region, $r_H < r < \infty$, onto the entire real line, $-\infty < x < \infty$, and allows us to rewrite Eq. (5.3) in the form

$$-\frac{d^2 u}{dx^2} + V(x)u = -\frac{d^2 u}{dt^2} = \omega^2 u \tag{5.5}$$

where

$$V(x) = \frac{B_{\text{RN}}(r)}{r^2} (e^2 v^2 r^2 - 1) \tag{5.6}$$

with r given as a function of x through Eq. (5.4). The precise shape of V depends on the value of r_H , but in all cases $V(-\infty) = 0$ and $V(\infty) = e^2 v^2$.

Equation (5.5) is of the form of a non-relativistic Schroedinger equation, and the existence of an instability is equivalent to having a negative energy bound state. This is determined by the value of r_H . If $r_H > 1/(ev)$, then $V(x)$ is everywhere positive and there are no bound states. If instead $r_H < 1/(ev)$, there is a range of x where $V(x)$ is negative and a bound state becomes a possibility; numerical analysis shows that this actually happens if

$$r_H < \frac{c}{ev} \quad (5.7)$$

with $c \approx 0.557$ [14]. While linear analysis cannot by itself determine the eventual outcome of the instability, it seems clear that the result is a static magnetically charged black hole with W -boson hair.

Note that this stability analysis did not make use of the full structure of the Yang-Mills theory, but only relied on the existence of a charged vector field with a magnetic moment. Recalling the nontopological analysis of the 't Hooft-Polyakov monopole outlined in Sec. III, we see that the physical origin of the instability lies in the fact that in a sufficiently strong magnetic field it is energetically favorable to produce a nonzero W field. Making the horizon radius small enough guarantees that there will be a magnetic field of critical strength outside the horizon.

This instability has dramatic consequences for the ultimate fate of a magnetically charged black hole. Because of quantum mechanical effects, black holes emit thermal radiation at a Hawking temperature

$$T_H = \frac{\hbar}{4\pi} \left(\frac{B'}{\sqrt{AB}} \right)_{r=r_H} . \quad (5.8)$$

For a Schwarzschild black hole this temperature is inversely proportional to the mass, so that as the black hole radiates its temperature increases without limit, leading to complete evaporation in a finite time. A Reissner-Nordstrom black hole initially follows the same scenario. However, as the mass approaches the extremal value the temperature begins to decrease, with $T = 0$ in the extremal limit. Hence, unless the black hole loses its charge (e.g., by preferential Hawking radiation of particles of one charge over the other), the radiation will eventually cease and the black hole horizon will remain forever.

The instability we have found changes this scenario. Initially, the black hole radiates and loses mass, just as before. This causes the horizon to contract until the inequality (5.7) is satisfied. At this point, nonzero vector meson fields begin to appear outside the horizon, producing a black hole with hair whose Hawking temperature, like that of a Schwarzschild black hole, never vanishes. Radiation continues unimpeded until the horizon has contracted to a point, leaving behind a nonsingular monopole [15].

VI. STATIC BLACK HOLES WITHOUT SPHERICAL SYMMETRY

One of the most striking results in classical black hole physics is the fact that in the Einstein-Maxwell theory all static black holes are spherically symmetric [16,17]. In contrast with electrodynamics, where static solutions corresponding to point multipoles of arbitrary order are possible, higher “mass multipoles” seem to be ruled out. By extending the analysis of the previous section to Reissner-Nordstrom solutions with $q > 1$ units of magnetic charge, we can show that this is not always the case.

It is most convenient to work with the unitary gauge fields φ , \mathcal{A}_μ , and W_μ . The unperturbed solution has $\varphi(\mathbf{r}) = v$ and $W_\mu(\mathbf{r}) = 0$ everywhere, while the metric and electromagnetic field are those of a pure Reissner-Nordstrom solution with magnetic charge q/e . It is natural to expand the perturbations in spherical harmonics of appropriate types. For the scalar field, the electromagnetic field, and the metric, these are the standard scalar, vector, and tensor spherical harmonics. However, the expansion of the charged vector field must be modified. Recall that in the presence of a magnetic charge $Q_M = q/e$ a particle carrying electric charge e acquires an additional angular momentum of magnitude $eQ_M = q$ directed along the line from the particle to the magnetic charge. Because this is perpendicular to the ordinary orbital angular momentum $\mathbf{r} \times m\mathbf{v}$, the angular momentum of a spinless particle has a lower bound $\mathbf{L}^2 \geq q^2$. Correspondingly, in the expansion of a charged scalar field the usual spherical harmonics $Y_{LM}(\theta, \phi)$ must be replaced by monopole spherical harmonics [18,19] \mathcal{Y}_{qLM} , with $L = q, q+1, \dots$ and $M = -L, -L+1, \dots, L$. For a charged vector field (or more precisely, for its spatial components) one must introduce monopole vector harmonics labeled by a total angular momentum J . Since this is the result of adding unit spin angular momentum to the orbital angular momentum L , we can have $J = L-1, L$, or $L+1$. We therefore obtain vector monopole spherical harmonics [20,21] $\mathbf{C}_{qJM}^{(\lambda)}$, where $J = q-1, q, q+1, \dots$ and λ distinguishes between different harmonics with the same values of J and M . There are three such harmonics for most values of J , but for $J = q-1$ there is only a single multiplet of vector harmonics.

Note that $J = 0$ can occur only if $q = 1$, so that a spherically symmetric W field is possible only for unit magnetic charge. This explains the old result [22] that no finite energy $SU(2)$ configuration with multiple magnetic charge can be spherically symmetric. It also implies that any instability of the higher-charged Reissner-Nordstrom solutions must lead to a solution with non-spherically symmetric hair.

We now substitute the spherical harmonic expansions of the various fields into the action, keeping only terms quadratic in the perturbation. Because the unperturbed solution is spherically symmetric, the quadratic action splits into a sum of terms with different angular momentum. Each of these, in turn, splits into a part containing the metric and electromagnetic field perturbations, a part containing the scalar field perturbations, and a part involving only the perturbations of the massive vector field. As was noted previously, we know that the first of these cannot give any instability. It is easy to see that the second term is also positive definite. Thus, as with the singly-charged case of Sec. V, the only possible instability arises from the massive vector modes.

Once again, the presence of an instability is equivalent to the existence of a bound state in a Schrodinger-like problem. However, the analysis is more complicated than previously because there is more than one mode with the same values of J and M for $J \geq q$. Nevertheless, one still finds [14] that for all values of J there is a bound state, and thus an unstable mode, if the horizon radius r_H is less than a critical value $r_{\text{cr}}(J)$. The largest $r_{\text{cr}}(J)$ occurs for the minimum angular momentum, $J = q - 1$. Hence, a Reissner-Nordstrom solution with horizon radius just less than $r_{\text{cr}}(q - 1)$ has a single multiplet of $2q - 1$ normalized negative eigenmodes $\delta W_\mu = \psi_\mu^M$ that obey a differential equation of the form

$$\mathcal{M}_\mu{}^\nu \psi_\nu^M = -\beta^2 m^2 \psi_\mu^M \quad (6.1)$$

where m is the unperturbed mass of the black hole and β is dimensionless. The solution is therefore classically unstable against decay into a black hole with vector meson hair. Because $J = q - 1 \neq 0$, the latter solution cannot be spherically symmetric. It could, however, be axially symmetric if, e.g., only the mode with $M = 0$ were excited. Other combinations of modes, on the other hand, could lead to solutions with less symmetry, or possibly no rotational symmetry at all.

To see which of these is the case, we must go beyond this linear analysis [23]. If we assume that r_H is just below the critical value for instability, so that β is small, we can use a perturbative approach. Let

$$W_\mu = a m^{-1/2} \sum_M k_M \psi_\mu^M + \tilde{W}_\mu \equiv V_\mu + \tilde{W}_\mu \quad (6.2)$$

where \tilde{W}_μ is orthogonal to the negative modes. The constants k_M determine the angular dependence of the solution; they are assumed to be normalized so that

$$\sum_{M=-q+1}^{q-1} |k_M|^2 = 1. \quad (6.3)$$

We will see that the overall scale a is proportional to β/e .

Substituting Eq. (6.2) into the W -field equations, one finds that \tilde{W}_μ is of order $e^2 a^3$. Maxwell's equations show that the perturbation δA_μ of the electromagnetic field is of order ea^2 , while from Einstein's equations we find that the metric perturbation $h_{\mu\nu} = O(Gm^2 a^2)$. If we assume that $Gm^2 \ll e^2$, the dominant terms in the matter Lagrangian can be written schematically as

$$\mathcal{L}_{\text{matter}} = -V^{\mu*} \mathcal{M}_{\mu\nu} V^\nu + -e^2 V^4 + e(\delta\mathcal{A})V^2 + (\delta\mathcal{F})^2 + \dots \quad (6.4)$$

The first term is of order $\beta^2 a^2$, the next three are $O(e^2 a^4)$, and the omitted terms are suppressed by powers of either a or Gm^2/e^2 .

We now integrate Eq. (6.4) over the region outside the horizon. Extremizing the resulting action with respect to a shows that a is of order β/e . By choosing r_H to be sufficiently close to the critical value, we can make a small enough that the omitted terms in Eq. (6.4) are indeed negligible. We must also minimize with respect to the k_M . For the $q = 2$ doubly-charged

black hole, this gives an axially symmetric configuration. This axial symmetry does not survive for larger q . The $q = 3$ and $q = 4$ solutions have tetrahedral and cubic symmetries, respectively. (The somewhat surprising connection between these regular polyhedra and magnetic charges can be understood in terms of the number of zeroes of the $J = q - 1$ vector harmonics [23]. Similar behavior is also found in other contexts [24,25].) For larger q , there is in general no rotational symmetry at all.

At this point one can go back to the gravitational field equations and determine the metric perturbations. The angular dependence of the matter fields gives rise to higher gravitational multipole moments, with the consequent multipole fields only falling as powers of the distance from the black hole. However, despite the angular dependence, the surface gravity remains constant on the horizon, just as required by the zeroth law of black hole dynamics.

VII. THE MONOPOLE-BLACK HOLE TRANSITION

Let us now return to the case of unit magnetic charge and examine in more detail the transition from a nonsingular monopole to a magnetically-charged solution with a horizon [26]. In this section I will focus on the extremal solutions that form the boundary between these regimes, while in the next I will discuss the solutions that are just short of this critical limit.

Because both $1/A$ and $(1/A)'$ vanish at the extremal horizon $r = r_*$, it is a singular point of Eqs. (4.4-4.6), and we can expect to find nonanalytic behavior there. Indeed, since r itself is a singular coordinate at the horizon, in the sense that there is an infinite metric distance from $r = r_*$ to any other value of r , it would not be surprising if the derivatives of fields with respect to r were to diverge at the horizon. Ordinarily, physical considerations would determine the allowable singularities. However, here I am not actually requiring that the extremal solution be physically acceptable, but only that it be the limit of a family of physically acceptable nonsingular solutions. With this in mind, I will allow u' and h' to diverge, and will only require that this divergence be such that u'/\sqrt{A} and h'/\sqrt{A} remain finite. I will also assume that the leading singularities of the matter fields and of the metric functions are of the form $|r - r_*|^\alpha$, with the exponent α possibly being different on the two sides of the horizon.

With these assumptions, Eqs. (4.4-4.6) imply that at $r = r_*$ the matter fields must be at a stationary point of the r -dependent potential U , and that

$$1 - 8\pi G r_*^2 U(r_*) = 0. \quad (7.1)$$

This allows two possible scenarios: In one, the horizon occurs at the extremal Reissner-Nordstrom value $r_0 = \sqrt{4\pi G/e^2}$, and the matter fields at the horizon are $u_* = 0$ and $h_* = 1$. Since these values are those expected far from the monopole core, where only the Coulomb fields survive, I will refer to this case as having a ‘‘Coulomb region horizon’’. In the other possibility, $r_* < r_0$ and the matter fields have nontrivial values $u_* = \hat{u}(r_*)$ and $h_* = \hat{h}(r_*)$ at

the horizon. This gives an extremal solution with hair that I will refer to as having a “core region horizon”.

It was argued in Sec. IV that there were too many boundary conditions for one to expect a solution to be nonsingular at $r = 0$, $r = \infty$, and also at a horizon. The nonanalyticity at an extremal horizon invalidates this argument. One effectively has two independent boundary value problems to solve. Integrating out from the horizon to infinity, there are two free constants in the Taylor expansions of u and h at the horizon that can be adjusted so as to satisfy the two boundary conditions at $r = \infty$. Integrating inward, one must be able to satisfy three conditions at $r = 0$. The Taylor expansions of the matter fields at r_* (which are independent of the expansions on the other side of the horizon) only provide two adjustable constants. To obtain a third, we recall that an extremal solution only arises when v is at a critical value v_{cr} ; hence, we can think of v as being the third adjustable constant.

Carrying out this analysis in detail, one finds two rather different behaviors. With a Coulomb region horizon, the exterior solution is a pure Reissner-Nordstrom solution with $u = 0$ and $h = 1$. Just inside the horizon, one finds that

$$\begin{aligned} u &= p|x|^{1/2} + C_u|x|^{\gamma_u} + ax + \dots \\ h &= 1 - C_h|x|^{\gamma_h} + bx + \dots \\ \frac{1}{A} &= kx^2 + \dots \end{aligned} \tag{7.2}$$

where $x \equiv (r - r_*)/r_*$. Here p , k , a , and b are determined in terms of the parameters of the theory, as are the exponents γ_u and γ_h , both of which are greater than $1/2$. The constants C_u and C_h can be adjusted so that the boundary conditions at the origin are satisfied. The terms indicated by ellipses are determined by the terms shown explicitly. Note that $k \neq 1$, so that $(1/A)''$ is discontinuous at the horizon. (Solutions with the square root singularity in h rather than u are also possible.)

The solutions with core region horizons behave more smoothly and do not have a square root singularity. Near the horizon,

$$\begin{aligned} u &= \hat{u}(r_*) + ax + p_1 C_1 |x|^{\gamma_1} + p_2 C_2 |x|^{\gamma_2} + \dots \\ h &= \hat{h}(r_*) + bx + q_1 C_1 |x|^{\gamma_1} + q_2 C_2 |x|^{\gamma_2} + \dots \\ \frac{1}{A} &= Fx^2 + \dots \end{aligned} \tag{7.3}$$

The adjustable coefficients C_1 and C_2 can take on different values inside and outside the horizon, while the other constants are fixed by the parameters of the theory.

Numerical integration of the field equations is needed to determine which type of critical behavior actually happens in a particular case. When $\lambda/e^2 \lesssim 25$, the critical solution has a Coulomb region horizon [26,27]. For larger values of λ/e^2 , a core region horizon is found. The approach to the critical solution is rather curious in this case. Initially, there is a

minimum in $1/A$ at $r \approx r_0$ that gets deeper as v approaches v_{cr} , just as if a Coulomb region horizon were about to be formed. However, just before v_{cr} is reached a second minimum appears at a smaller value of r ; it is this latter minimum that becomes the extremal horizon.

To see what is perhaps the most striking difference between the two cases, we must return to Eq. (4.7), which we have thus far ignored. Integrating this equation, we find that

$$(AB)_r = (AB)_\infty \exp \left[-16\pi G \int_r^\infty ds s K \right] \quad (7.4)$$

where K , defined in Eq. (4.2), contains the gradient terms in the dimensionally reduced matter Lagrangian. This does not lead to anything particularly unusual when there is a core region horizon. For a Coulomb region horizon, on the other hand, the square root singularity in u (or h) leads to a divergence in the integral on the right hand side of this equation. This gives a step-function rise in AB , so that for any two points $r_1 < r_*$ and $r_2 > r_*$

$$\frac{(AB)_{r_1}}{(AB)_{r_2}} = 0. \quad (7.5)$$

This behavior at a Coulomb region horizon leads to a phenomenon identified recently by Horowitz and Ross [28,29]. It is often said that, because the horizon is only a coordinate singularity rather than a true curvature singularity, a freely-falling observer should feel no unusual effects at the time of crossing the horizon. In fact, the acceleration of a radially infalling observer near the horizon can invalidate this conclusion. This can be seen by relating the curvature components in a boosted frame where the observer is instantaneously at rest to the components in a “static” frame where the metric is time-independent. Using orthonormal components in both cases, we have

$$\begin{aligned} R_{t'kt'k} &= R_{tktk} + \sinh^2 \alpha (R_{tktk} + R_{rkrk}) \\ R_{r'kr'k} &= R_{rkrk} + \sinh^2 \alpha (R_{tktk} + R_{rkrk}) \\ R_{t'kr'k} &= \sinh \alpha \cosh \alpha (R_{tktk} + R_{rkrk}) \\ R_{t'r't'r'} &= R_{trtr} \end{aligned} \quad (7.6)$$

where primes denote coordinates in the infalling frame, k indicates either transverse angular coordinate, and α is the boost factor. Since α can become large as the observer nears the horizon, it is possible for the curvature components in the infalling frame (i.e., the components actually “felt” by the observer) to be large even though all components in the static frame are small. The fact that this does not happen in the Schwarzschild and Reissner-Nordstrom metrics is a consequence of the fact that these metrics have the special property that $R_{tktk} + R_{rkrk} = 0$.

In an arbitrary metric of the form of Eq. (2.2), an infalling particle with an energy to mass ratio E feels a tidal force proportional to

$$R_{t'kt'k} = -\frac{1}{2r} \frac{d}{dr} \left[\frac{E^2}{AB} - \frac{1}{A} \right]. \quad (7.7)$$

Horowitz and Ross exhibited several examples of dilaton black holes for which this quantity becomes large at exterior points near the horizon. Because this implies that an observer will feel a black hole-induced “singularity” even before crossing the horizon, they termed such solutions “naked black holes”.

Comparing Eqs. (7.5) and (7.7), we see that the same phenomenon occurs for near-critical monopole solutions that are close to developing a Coulomb region horizon. As the extremal solution is approached, the value of the right hand side of Eq. (7.7) at the quasi-horizon diverges. Hence, these solutions become “naked black holes” even before they become black holes. It might be tempting to conclude that this singular behavior is a necessary concomitant of the transition from a nonsingular spacetime to one with a horizon. However, the existence of solutions with core region horizons at large λ/e^2 shows that this is not the case.

VIII. QUASI-BLACK HOLES AND THE EMERGENCE OF BLACK HOLE ENTROPY

I now turn to solutions that are just short of being black holes; i.e., solutions for which the minimum of $1/A$ has a value ϵ that, while positive, is very close to zero. These are nonsingular and topologically trivial. However, one might expect that as ϵ decreases and the critical solution is approached, it would be harder and harder for an external observer to distinguish these solutions from true black holes. Hence, it seems appropriate to call these “quasi-black holes”, and to denote the minimum of $1/A$ at $r = r_*$ a “quasi-horizon”.

Let us now consider how these solutions would appear to an observer who remains at a radius $r \gg r_*$ [30]. In order to determine whether or not the solution was actually a black hole, the observer could employ various means to try to probe the region inside the quasi-horizon. One possibility would be send in a particle and wait for it to emerge again. Thus, consider a massive particle moving on a geodesic that starts from an initial radius $r_1 \gg r_*$ at time t , goes in to a minimum radius $r_{\min} < r_*$, and then returns again to r_1 at a time $t + \Delta t$. Without loss of generality, we can assume that the geodesic lies in the $\theta = \pi/2$ plane. It will be characterized by the conserved energy per unit mass $E = B(dt/d\tau)$ and angular momentum per unit mass $J = r^2(d\phi/d\tau)$. A standard calculation then gives

$$\frac{dr}{d\tau} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{AB}} \left[E^2 - B \left(\frac{J^2}{r^2} + 1 \right) \right]^{1/2}. \quad (8.1)$$

Integrating $dt/dr = (dt/d\tau)/(dr/d\tau)$ gives the elapsed coordinate time

$$\Delta t = 2 \int_{r_{\min}}^{r_1} dr \frac{A}{\sqrt{AB}} \left[1 - \frac{B}{E^2} \left(\frac{J^2}{r^2} + 1 \right) \right]^{-1/2}. \quad (8.2)$$

For a solution with a core region quasi-horizon, the integral is dominated by the region $r \approx r_*$, and

$$\Delta t \approx k_1 \frac{r_*}{\sqrt{(AB)_{r_*}}} \epsilon^{-1/2} \quad (8.3)$$

where k_1 is a constant of order unity.

In the Coulomb horizon regime, the interior dominates the integral and

$$\Delta t \approx k_2 r_* \epsilon^{-q} \quad (8.4)$$

where k_2 is also of order unity and $0.7 < q < 1$. Curiously, although the coordinate time needed to traverse the interior diverges in the critical limit, for this case the proper time vanishes as ϵ^q .

One could also probe the quasi-black hole by scattering waves off of it. Consider, for example, a massive scalar field ϕ obeying the curved space Klein-Gordon equation

$$0 = \frac{1}{\sqrt{g}} \partial_\mu [\sqrt{g} g^{\mu\nu} \partial_\nu \phi] + m^2 \phi. \quad (8.5)$$

By defining $\psi = r\phi$ and introducing a new coordinate y obeying

$$\frac{dr}{dy} = \frac{\sqrt{AB}}{A} \quad (8.6)$$

we can rewrite this equation as

$$0 = \frac{\partial^2 \psi}{\partial t^2} - \frac{\partial^2 \psi}{\partial y^2} + [U(r) + m^2 B] \psi \quad (8.7)$$

where the potential

$$\begin{aligned} U &= \frac{1}{2r} \frac{d}{dr} \left[\frac{AB}{A^2} \right] + \frac{J(J+1)}{r^2} B \\ &= \frac{AB}{rA} \left[\frac{8\pi GK}{A} - \frac{d}{dr} \left(\frac{1}{A} \right) + \frac{J(J+1)}{r} \right]. \end{aligned} \quad (8.8)$$

For either type of critical solution $U(r_*)$ tends to zero as $\epsilon \rightarrow 0$. As a result, there is a clear distinction between the reflected wave arising from interaction with the potential in the region $r > r_*$ and that arising from interactions in the region $r < r_*$. As the critical limit is approached, the former becomes indistinguishable from the wave reflected by the corresponding black hole solution. The existence of a reflected wave from the interior region, as well as of a transmitted wave, distinguishes the nonsingular monopole from the black hole. However, both of these suffer a time delay proportional to either $\epsilon^{-1/2}$ or ϵ^{-q} , just as for the particle probe.

An external observer with unlimited time available would be able to use probes such as these to gain information about the interior region of the quasi-black hole. However, any real observer must work on some finite time scale $\Delta\mathcal{T}$. For such an observer, the interior is inaccessible if ϵ is too small [less than $(\Delta\mathcal{T})^{-2}$ or $(\Delta\mathcal{T})^{-1/q}$ for the core- and Coulomb-type solutions, respectively]. The natural way to describe the system would then be by means of

a density matrix ρ that was obtained by tracing over the degrees of freedom in the interior. This in turn would give rise to a naturally defined entropy

$$S_{\text{QBH}} = -\text{Tr } \rho \ln \rho \quad (8.9)$$

for the quasi-black hole

An estimate of the value of this entropy can be obtained from a calculation by Srednicki [31]. He considered a free massless scalar field in a flat spacetime. Assuming that the system was in its ground state, by tracing over the degrees of freedom inside an arbitrary spherical region he obtained an entropy

$$S = \kappa M^2 A \quad (8.10)$$

where κ is a numerical constant of order unity, M is an ultraviolet cutoff, and A is the area of the boundary of the region. In a gravitational context, we expect the Planck mass to provide the ultraviolet cutoff. Hence, it is quite plausible that in the critical limit the entropy of the quasi-black hole will approach the Bekenstein-Hawking black hole entropy $(1/4)M_{\text{Pl}}^2 A$. However, in contrast with the black hole case, the quasi-black hole is topologically trivial. Its “interior” is nonsingular and static. Furthermore, this region is unambiguously defined, so that it is at least conceptually clear what it means to trace over the interior degrees of freedom.

IX. THE THIRD LAW OF BLACK HOLE DYNAMICS

The third law of thermodynamics has several formulations, one of which states the impossibility of reaching zero temperature in a finite time. Since extremal black holes have zero Hawking temperature, the analogies between thermodynamics and black hole dynamics then suggest that they should be difficult, if not impossible, to create. Indeed, one formulation of the third law of black hole dynamics states that, under certain technical assumptions, a nonextremal black hole cannot be made extremal [32]. The essential difficulty can be understood by recalling that an extremal Reissner-Nordstrom black hole has a mass and a charge that are equal in Planck units, whereas a nonextremal black hole has greater mass than charge. If one tried to make a nonextremal black hole extremal by dropping in matter with more charge than mass, the Coulomb repulsion would tend to overcome the gravitational attraction.

One could also try to produce an extremal black hole by starting with a nonsingular spacetime and allowing the collapse of a shell of matter with a properly adjusted mass to charge ratio. Boulware showed that this could in fact be done [33]. However, this mechanism relies crucially on the shell being infinitely thin; it fails for shells of finite thickness.

The quasi-black holes of the previous section suggest another possibility. Because of the cancellation of the Coulomb energy in the core by the magnetic dipole interaction, these monopoles have greater charge than mass. To bring them to criticality and produce an extremal black hole, it should only be necessary to drop in an appropriate amount of

uncharged matter. With a Coulomb region quasi-horizon, one might run into difficulties from the naked black hole behavior. However, these can be avoided by working in the high λ/e^2 regime where the critical solution has a core region horizon. A variation on this process starts with a solution containing a small black hole in the center of the monopole core and an almost critical quasi-horizon further out in the monopole core. Here, the effect of the infalling matter is to replace the initial finite temperature horizon by a zero temperature horizon at a larger value of r . This scenario has been tested by numerical simulations using a massive neutral scalar field as the infalling matter [30]. The results of these are completely consistent with expectations. The possibility of such processes should give us clues for a more precise formulation of the third law of black hole dynamics.

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